

CHILDREN'S MINISTRY WORKER HANDBOOK

CALVARY PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN AMERICA, RALEIGH NC



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Dear Children's Ministry Worker,

Thank you for serving the children and families of Calvary Presbyterian Church! At Calvary, we take our responsibility to care for children very seriously.

Since you have been screened and approved to care for children in the church, you have already read and agreed to follow the policies and procedures in the <u>Calvary Child Protection Policy and Procedures</u>. The <u>Calvary Children's Ministry Worker Handbook</u> is intended to be paired with the information provided in the Child Protection Policy and Procedures. This pairing ensures that each ministry worker has the information needed to provide a consistent, safe, and nurturing environment in which children can grow in relationship with Jesus, and their families feel cared for and supported in the process!

Some of the handbook information may overlap with the Child Protection Policy and Procedures as they pertain to Children's Ministry through Pre-K children, but some of the information is intended to provide specific details that are not outlined in the Child Protection Policies and Procedures. Please make sure you are familiar with all of the information provided.

After you have carefully read this handbook, please sign and return the agreement form located on the last page. You will not be able to serve in the Children's Ministry until you have signed and returned this agreement form.

Thank you again for your commitment "to bring glory to God in this generation and the next" by serving in this vital ministry of the church!

"And he (Jesus) took a child and put him in the midst of them, and taking him in his arms, he said to them, "Whoever receives one such child in my name receives me, and whoever receives me, receives not me but him who sent me."

Mark 9:36-37



CHILDREN'S MINISTRY WORKER EXPECTATIONS

All Calvary Children's Ministry workers are expected to:

- Successfully complete all initial eligibility steps outlined in the <u>Calvary Child Protection Policy and Procedures</u> to be **screened and approved.**
- Successfully complete all required training and training renewals at the specified times.
- Follow all of the provided policies and procedures, including the <u>Calvary Child Protection Policy</u> and <u>Procedures</u> and the <u>Calvary Children's Ministry Worker Handbook</u> to maintain a consistent, safe and nurturing environment.
- Follow all COVID-19 Safety Protocols and the Children's Ministry Worker Wellness Policy.
- Review all provided information (emails, newsletters, announcements, etc.) from Calvary PCA leadership to ensure you understand any amendments and/or updates made to any of the policies, procedures and protocols.
- Promptly make arrangements for scheduling changes and communicate changes in a timely manner, as able, if you cannot serve in the Children's Ministry on your assigned week.
- Focus time and attention on the children, engaging them in play. Take advantage of every
 opportunity to incorporate Biblical truths into your play and activities. For example, while looking
 at a book, say "See the horse? God made horses. What else did God make? God made all things!"

CHILDREN'S MINISTRY WORKER PROFESSIONALISM & CONFIDENTIALITY

While working with young children is rewarding, it can also present challenges. The professionalism displayed by each Children's Ministry worker in all situations during the service sets the tone for the quality and integrity of the Children's Ministry and the church as a whole. Serving in the Children's Ministry is a way to display the church's core values in a visible way.

To maintain appropriate professionalism, both paid and volunteer workers should:

- Be ready to receive children at least 15 minutes before your scheduled Children's Ministry service time.
- If you believe you will arrive late, please contact the Children's Ministry coordinator immediately to ensure the Children's Ministry rooms will be properly staffed until your arrival. If not available, contact an approved Children's Ministry worker.
- Dress in a manner to ensure you can carry out your role effectively and with discretion.
- Wear a name tag to remind parents and caregivers who is caring for their child.
- Refer to other workers by Ms. or Mr. (first name) when children are present.
- Keep outside conversations with other Children's Ministry workers to a minimum.
- Refrain from cell phone usage, unless usage is directly related to your Children's Ministry responsibilities (ex. contacting a parent/caregiver, emergency situations, etc.)
- Discuss individual children or their challenges ONLY in private where the child, other children, or other parents/caregivers cannot hear.
- Hold any confidential and/or sensitive information in strictest confidence, only sharing what is
 necessary with whom it is necessary, to safely and effectively care for each child and their
 respective families. Please note that any information received regarding abuse or neglect MUST
 be reported. All reports of child abuse or neglect will be held in absolute confidence, and no



- person should communicate any information concerning the alleged event to anyone except as necessary to cooperate with any official investigation.
- Maintain a professional attitude with parents and caregivers while discussing any questions, concerns, and/or communicating with them about their child's activities and behavior in the Children's Ministry.
- Maintain a professional attitude with other workers at all times while serving alongside one
 another. We understand that it can be difficult at times to deal with personal issues/conflicts with
 other workers while maintaining a professional attitude. If there are any conflicts that arise
 between workers, we implore each worker to solve any conflicts in a Biblical manner and flee from
 any temptation for gossip and slander.

CHILDREN'S MINISTRY WORKER ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The following specific worker roles and responsibilities are recommended for consistency:

Children's Ministry Check-in Worker:

- Receive specific training in the designated Children's Ministry Check-in System and procedures to ensure a high standard of safety and security is followed.
- Greet families at the Check-in Station and assist them in the check-in process to safely drop off their child(ren).
- Check to ensure that all items brought (ex. bottles, diaper bags) are labeled.
- Ensure that each child has a name label prior to entering the Children's Ministry classroom and that each parent/caregiver has the needed items (ex. pager, check-out badge).
- Assist first-time visitors with Child Registration.
- Communicate any important information regarding child pick-up to visitors, such as authorized pick-up people and the check-out process.
- Serve as a Children's Ministry Classroom Alternate when a classroom needs an additional worker to stay within the specific worker-to-child ratios.
- Take a pager with you when you leave the check-in station. Return it after the service or activity.

Lead Worker:

- Remain stationed near the Children's Ministry door during child check-in time to greet and welcome all parents/caregivers and their children. Don't forget to smile! Introduce yourself by name and be prepared to answer any of their specific questions or concerns.
- Assist children (when age-appropriate) with application of hand sanitizer prior to entering the Children's Ministry room.
- Take all children's labeled personal items from parents/caregivers and place them in the designated place. Take note of any non-labeled items and label as needed.
- Document any injuries occurring in the Children's Ministry on an "Incident Report Form" and provide a copy to the parent/caregiver if requested.
- Oversee the cleaning, sanitizing, and disinfecting of Children's Ministry items and surfaces to ensure the approved cleaning plan is being followed.



- Greet parents and caregivers at the classroom door at the end of the program/activity to safely and securely check children out of the Children's Ministry.
- Oversee the Children's Ministry "close down" procedures.

Assistant Worker(s):

- Welcome children into the Children's Ministry and be ready to assist the Lead Worker in helping a timid child successfully separate from their parent/caregiver into the room.
- Engage "checked-in" children in play and activities while the Lead Worker is greeting others.
- Assist with cleaning, disinfecting, and sanitizing classroom items and surfaces.
- Prepare snack and clean up following snack time.
- Assist the Lead Worker with Children's Ministry "close down" procedures.

AGES OF CHILDREN SERVED

The Calvary Children's Ministry cares for infants, babies, toddlers, and preschoolers from the age of 3 months up to 5 years old (pre-kindergarten).

WORKER TO CHILD RATIOS

The Children's Ministry abides by the "Two Adult Rule," meaning that a minimum of two unrelated, approved adult workers should be present in the Children's Ministry classrooms. In each Children's Ministry classroom, there will be a lead worker and at least one assistant worker.

CHILDREN'S MINISTRY PROGRAM	WORKERS	WORKER TO CHILD RATIO
Infant/Toddler (0-2 years)	At least 2	1:3
Preschool (3-5 years)	At least 2	1:4

If a classroom is 'out of ratio' the Lead Worker must **immediately** find additional workers to bring the worker-to-child ratio into compliance.

To most effectively and efficiently staff a Children's Ministry classroom, 'out of ratio' workers should:

- 1. Contact/Page the Check-in worker. This worker will serve as an alternate and if a Children's Ministry classroom becomes 'out of ratio', they should be contacted to join the other assigned Children's Ministry workers.
- 2. If the Check-in worker is not available, or if more than one additional worker is needed, the Children's Ministry coordinator should be contacted immediately to locate an additional Children's Ministry worker(s).
- 3. If the above personnel are not available, the Lead Worker will contact approved ministry workers.



PROCEDURE TO COMMUNICATE SCHEDULING CHANGES

To ensure proper communication, the following procedures should be followed:

- 1. If the need for a scheduling change is due to illness or possible exposure to a communicable disease, **immediately** inform the Children's Ministry coordinator.
- 2. If a scheduling change is not due to illness, you can first refer to the Children's Ministry schedule to contact an **approved worker** to replace you.
- 3. Communicate the changes to the Children's Ministry coordinator and If possible, communicate to the Calvary PCA office at office@calvarypca.org no later than Wednesday at noon of the week you are scheduled to serve.
- 4. If you are unable to find a replacement within 48 hours of your scheduled date, contact the Children's Ministry Coordinator for assistance.

CHILDREN'S MINISTRY CHECK-IN PROCEDURES

The recommended check-in procedures are as follows:

- Remain stationed at the designated "check-in station" to ensure that parents/caregivers and their child(ren) are served with thoughtful care.
- Follow all steps in the designated "Children's Ministry Check-in" System for secure check-in.
- Assist first-time visitors with Child Registration and regular attenders with any child information updates (every 6 months).
- Ensure all personal items are labeled with the child's name.
- Inform parents/caregivers that every person authorized to pick up their child **must** be listed on the registration form and must provide a form of identification if they are unknown to the Children's Ministry worker.
- Inform parents/caregivers that they must bring back the label/tag they received at check-in to be able to pick up their child at the end of the service or activity.
- Professionally communicate any important immediate information provided on registration forms (ex. allergies) to assigned Children's Ministry workers.
- Provide a pager to the parent/caregiver in case they need to be contacted.
- Remain at the check-in station for 15 minutes after the beginning of the service or activity to
 ensure that any latecomers can still be served. Following this allotted time:
 - 1. Put the provided sign on the check-in station instructing late-arriving parents/caregivers to check-in directly at the Children's Ministry room.
 - 2. Check-in with each Children's Ministry room to ensure they have no further needs.
 - 3. Take a pager to be "on call," and/or keep your cell phone available at all times during the service.

CHILDREN'S MINISTRY CHECK-OUT PROCEDURES

The recommended check-out procedures are as follows:

- Parents/Caregivers wait directly outside of the Children's Ministry class door to pick up their child.
- Parents/Caregivers must return the identification label they received during check-in to the Lead Worker **before** their child can be released back into their care.
- For safety reasons, **ONLY** release the child to their parents, guardians, or persons specifically authorized in writing to pick up their child.



- If an individual picking up a child is not familiar to the Children's Ministry worker, the worker must ask for picture identification as an extra precaution to ensure the individual is authorized.
- Return all of the child's personal items to the parent/caregiver.
- Sanitize the child's hands (if age-appropriate) prior to exit from the Children's Ministry room.
- Feel free to briefly share with the parents/caregivers about the child(s) time and activities in the Children's Ministry, but do not share private/sensitive information regarding the child in the presence of other parents/caregivers.
- All assigned Children's Ministry workers must remain in their assigned posts until all children in their care have been picked up and/or until their duties are fulfilled. One Children's Ministry worker should never be left alone with a child(ren).

CHILDREN'S MINISTRY CLOSE-DOWN PROCEDURES

- All Children's Ministry workers must remain in the classroom until all children have been released from their care. Prior to leaving the classroom, please complete the following tasks:
- Complete all cleaning tasks outlined in the Cleaning and Hand Hygiene section.
- Put all newly cleaned toys back in their proper place.
- Turn off used pagers and place them back in the charging base.
- Ensure all check-in equipment and materials are secure and ready for the next use.
- Tie up the garbage bag and place it in the kitchen garbage (janitor will replace with a fresh bag.)
- Tie up all trash and put it in the kitchen garbage.

WELLNESS POLICY FOR CHILDREN AND WORKERS

The health of all children and Children's Ministry workers is of utmost importance. Therefore, Children's Ministry workers are **NOT** permitted to serve in any program or activity for the Children's Ministry if they are currently experiencing or have recently exhibited any of the symptoms or conditions below. Furthermore, Children's Ministry workers reserve the right to deny entrance to the Children's Ministry for a child who is currently experiencing or has recently had any of the following symptoms or conditions:

- Fever of 100.4 or higher per the Center for Disease Control (CDC) and/ or chills
- Cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Fatigue
- Muscle or body aches
- Headache
- New loss of taste or smell
- Sore throat (If strep throat, must be on a physician-prescribed antibiotic for at least 24 hours)
- Congestion and/or a runny nose that is thick or dark in color (not related to allergies)
- Nausea and/or vomiting
- Diarrhea
- Unexplained rashes or skin infections/conditions (besides diaper rash on a child)
- Eye infections of any kind
- Ringworm, scabies, or active head lice
- Any acute infectious disease or communicable childhood disease (ex. COVID-19, chickenpox)



If a child becomes sick while in the Children's Ministry:

- Contact the parent or guardian **immediately** so the child can be promptly returned to their care.
- If an immediate return is not possible, the sick child should be isolated from other children in a manner that allows the Children's Ministry worker(s) to safely monitor them until the parent or guardian is able to pick them up.

If a child becomes sick soon after attending Calvary:

- The parent or guardian should be instructed to contact the Children's Ministry coordinator immediately at nurserycoordinator@calvarypca.org. If the coordinator is not available, they can contact the church office at office@calvarypca.org.
- Children's Ministry workers and parents of children possibly exposed may be notified. Notification is especially important with infectious diseases such as COVID-19, chickenpox, pink eye, lice, ringworm, etc. Please honor the privacy of the family and only inform the necessary parties about possible exposure.

If a Children's Ministry worker begins to feel ill while serving in the Children's Ministry:

- Immediately contact the assigned "child check-in" worker to take your place.
- If the "child check-in" worker is already serving due to worker-to-child ratio needs, contact the Children's Ministry coordinator to find an approved Children's Ministry worker to take your place.
- Leave the Children's Ministry room as soon as possible to minimize the spread of illness.

If a Children's Ministry worker becomes ill shortly after serving in the Children's Ministry:

• Promptly communicate with the Children's Ministry Coordinator (or the church office if the coordinator is unavailable) because other workers or families may need to be notified. Notification is especially important with infectious diseases such as COVID-19, chickenpox, pink eye, lice, ringworm, etc. Your confidentiality will be kept if at all possible, but cannot be guaranteed.

ADMINISTERING MEDICATIONS TO CHILDREN

- Medications (prescription or non-prescription) will **not** be administered by Children's Ministry workers to children under our care.
- Medications should only be administered by a parent or guardian.
- Exceptions may be granted for parents of children with potentially life-threatening conditions (ex. asthma, severe allergic reactions, etc.). Parents or guardians of such children should address their situation with the Children's Ministry Coordinator to develop a plan of action. No medications or treatments will be given to a child without a signed note from a parent and their physician.

ACCIDENTAL INJURIES TO CHILDREN

In the event that a child is injured while under our care, follow these steps:

- For minor injuries, scrapes, and bruises, workers will provide First Aid (Band-Aids, etc.) as appropriate and will notify the child's parent or legal guardian of the injury at the time the child is picked up from our care.
- Take reasonable steps to avoid contact with blood, saliva, or other bodily fluids. Wear gloves when handling any of these fluids.



- For injuries requiring medical treatment beyond simple First Aid, the parent or legal guardian will immediately be summoned in addition to the Children's Ministry Coordinator (if applicable.) If warranted by circumstances, an ambulance will be called.
- Once the child has received appropriate medical attention, an <u>Incident Report Form</u> will be completed in the case of injuries requiring First Aid or treatment by a medical professional. The Incident Report Form must be signed by the parent/legal guardian to ensure that they were informed of the incident. A copy of the form should be provided to the parent upon request. The original form should be kept in a designated secure location at church for one year following the incident and shredded following that time.

DIAPERING AND RESTROOM GUIDELINES

Because many children may require full or partial assistance with their restroom activities, all Children's Ministry workers will observe the following policies:

Diapering:

- Only **adult female** Children's Ministry workers or the child's parent or guardian will undertake the diapering of children of either gender.
- Changing diapers should be done in plain sight of other Children's Ministry workers.
- Children will never be left unattended on changing tables.
- Parents will offer instruction to staff members or volunteers to change the diapers of special needs individuals. After the age of 4, parents or legal guardians will change all special needs individuals.

Restroom Assistance for Children Younger than Kindergarten:

- Parents and guardians are strongly encouraged to have their children visit the restroom prior to entering the Children's Ministry classroom.
- Only **adult female** workers or the child's parent or guardian will participate in restroom assistance with young children of either gender.
- Use a classroom restroom if one is available. If not available, workers should escort a group of children to the hallway restroom, **never** taking a child alone.
- Leave the restroom door ajar with a second worker nearby for additional accountability. A worker should **never** be alone with a child in the restroom with the door closed and never be in a closed restroom stall with a child.
- Never leave young children unattended in a restroom.
- Children should be verbally assisted where possible. If physical assistance is necessary, another staff member or volunteer should be present, when possible.



CLEANING AND HAND HYGIENE

To prevent the spread of illness and protect the health and safety of Children's Ministry workers, children, and their families, the Children's Ministry will follow required and recommended cleaning practices and hand hygiene provided by the CDC and the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services (NCDHHS):

Cleaning, Disinfecting, and Sanitizing:

The Children's Ministry areas will be cleaned with a food-safe disinfectant approved by the CDC and the U.S Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to further reduce the spread of infection. **This cleaner will be able to clean, sanitize and disinfect in one step.** Cleaning responsibilities during the service/activity and at the end of the service/activity:

SURFACE AREA/ITEM	BEFORE EACH USE	AFTER EACH USE	AT END OF SERVICE/ACTIVITY	COMMENTS
High Chair and Trays	•	~		
Tables (for serving food)	•	•		
Tables (for play)			~	
Plastic Toys (mouthed or contaminated by bodily fluids)		•		Put in dirty toy bin immediately after contamination
Plastic Toys (non-mouthed)			•	Spray with sanitizing spray
Machine Washable Cloth Toys		~		If used, put in hamper to be laundered
Changing Tables		•		
Crib Sheets and/or Blankets		~		Put on fresh sheet before each use and launder if used
Crib, Pack 'n Play		•		
Door/Cabinet Handles and Light Switches			~	
Electronics (computer keyboard, pagers)			~	Do not spray directly on electronics. Spray on a cloth & wipe
Garbage			~	Tie up garbage bags and take to the kitchen trash



Hand Washing and Use of Hand Sanitizer:

- Per the CDC, the most reliable way to prevent infection from surfaces is to regularly wash hands or use hand sanitizer.
- Under close supervision from a parent and/or Children's Ministry worker, child(ren) over the age
 of 2 years old will have their hands sanitized with hand sanitizer or a sanitizing wipe during arrival
 and dismissal from Children's Ministry classrooms. Per the NCDHHS, the hand sanitizer will
 contain at least 60% alcohol for adequate effectiveness. Please keep hand sanitizer out of the
 reach of children at all times and DO NOT allow children independent access to sanitizer.
- Children's Ministry workers will monitor and reinforce children to practice good hand washing/hand sanitizing hygiene during key times such as:
 - 1. Upon entry to the Children's Ministry room
 - 2. After being outdoors
 - 3. Before eating a snack
 - 4. After using the restroom or having diaper changed
 - 5. Prior to leaving the Children's Ministry room
- All assigned Children's Ministry workers must wash their hands at the following times:
 - 1. Upon arrival
 - 2. Before and after preparing food or drinks
 - 3. Before and after eating or handling food or feeding children
 - 4. After touching a child's face
 - 5. After diapering a child
 - 6. After using the restroom or after helping a child use the restroom
 - 7. After having contact with body fluids
 - 8. After handling garbage

SNACK FOR CHILDREN

The Children's Ministry will provide a store-bought, individually packaged nut-free snack for children when age-appropriate (ex. Cheerios). If a parent/caregiver does not want their child to have the snack provided, let the Lead Teacher know and other arrangements may be made. Parents/caregivers are responsible for bringing cups or bottles for their children.

CRYING

If a child is upset and has been crying for a maximum of 10 minutes (or specific time provided by parent/caregiver) and all appropriate methods of calming have been attempted (ex. holding, singing, rocking, changing diaper, feeding), the parent/caregiver must be contacted to check on and comfort them in the family room.

DISCIPLINE

Children's Ministry workers are **prohibited from using any form of physical discipline in any manner** on minors.

 This prohibition includes: spanking, slapping, pinching, hitting, biting, shaking or any other physical force as retaliation or corrections for inappropriate behaviors.



- Physical restraint should **only** be used in a situation where it is necessary to prevent a child from physically harming themselves or another individual.
- Disruptive children may be removed from the group when necessary while still maintaining appropriate supervision.
- Children are to be disciplined using time-outs (if age-appropriate) and other non-physical methods of behavior management. Please see below for recommended steps:
 - 1. Verbally redirect the child before physically intervening. With younger children, some physical redirection may be necessary (ex. removing a toy from the hands of the child that is hitting another).
 - 2. If the behavior does not cease, remove or direct the child away from the group or activity. **Do not ever physically hold a child in a time-out.**
 - 3. Provide the child with a simple, understandable reason for the separation, if applicable.
 - 4. If the child continues to exhibit negative behaviors after two verbal corrections and redirecting, parents or guardians will be contacted to intervene.
 - 5. After parent or guardian intervention, if the child continues to exhibit negative behaviors that could potentially harm him/herself or others (ex. biting, hitting) the parent/caregiver must remove the child from the current Children's Ministry setting.

VERBAL INTERACTIONS WITH CHILDREN

Verbal Interactions between workers and children at Calvary PCA should be positive and uplifting. Workers need to be mindful of their mission of aiding parents in the spiritual growth and development of the children in their care.

- Appropriate verbal interaction should involve positive reinforcement, appropriate jokes, and praise and encouragement as much as possible.
- Inappropriate verbal interaction includes yelling, name-calling, and sexually oriented conversations. Workers should **not** talk to children in a way that is or could be construed by a reasonable observer as harsh, threatening, intimidating, shaming, derogatory, demeaning, or humiliating.

PHYSICAL CONTACT AND AFFECTION

The following guidelines are to be carefully followed by Children's Ministry workers:

- Appropriate forms of physical contact such as lap-sitting (age 5 and younger), hugging (brief and open), pats on the back, an arm around the shoulder (brief and loose), high-fives and hand-shakes between workers and children are important for children's development, and are generally suitable in the church setting.
- Inappropriate touching and inappropriate displays of affection such as kissing, touching sensitive areas, massages, and physical affection in isolated areas are forbidden.
- Any inappropriate behavior or suspected abuse should immediately be reported to the ministry leader as well as to the Child Protection Supervisor and Senior Pastor (or Session Representative when the Senior Pastor is unavailable.) Please refer to the Child Protection Policy and Procedures for reporting requirements and procedures.



- Physical contact should be for the benefit of the child and never be based upon the emotional needs of a staff member or volunteer.
- Physical contact and affection should be given only in observable places or when in the presence
 of other children or workers. It is much less likely that touch will be inappropriate or
 misinterpreted when physical contact is open to observation.
- Physical contact in any form should not give even the appearance of wrongdoing. The personal behavior of employees and volunteers must foster trust at all times. Personal conduct must be above reproach.
- Do not force physical contact, touch, or affection on a reluctant child. A child's preference not to be touched must be respected.
- Workers are responsible for protecting minors under their supervision from inappropriate or unwanted touch by others.

EMERGENCY EVACUATION PROCEDURES

In the case of a building evacuation, Children's Ministry workers should follow established procedures in order to safely remove children from the building:

- All workers and children should leave the building through the nearest exit to the designated meeting location. While evacuating, all workers and children should remain together. One adult worker must lead the group and another adult worker must remain in the back of the group to ensure all children exit safely.
- After exiting the building, count the children and verify all are present. After the children are
 accounted for, the Children's Ministry Workers may release the children to their parents,
 guardians, or persons authorized in writing to pick up their child.



CHILDREN'S MINISTRY WORKER CONTRACT

I have received and read a copy of the <u>Calvary Children's Ministry Handbook</u> and I understand the importance of the matters set forth within. I agree to follow and abide by all of these policies and procedures during my service as a Children's Ministry worker.

Furthermore, I acknowledge that I am required to successfully complete all required training and training renewals at the specified times to continue to serve in the Children's Ministry.

I also acknowledge that the handbook may be modified and that any guidelines may be amended, revised, or eliminated at any time following Calvary Session approval.

Finally, I understand that it is my responsibility to review new guidelines that are created and distributed, as well as handbook guidelines that are changed or deleted.

PRINTED NAME:		
SIGNATURE:	DATE:	
ADDRESS:		
		
EMAIL:	PHONE:	